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discrimination, and published as an appendix. These contain historical illustrations of many points, which could only be slightly mentioned in a general discourse. Among other things is a long and beautiful extract from the manuscript of President Kirkland's sermon, preached at the funeral of Mr Buckminster, for which Mr Palfrey acknowledges himself indebted to the kindness of the author. For our own benefit, and that of the public, we should be glad if other and more copious treasures could in some way be drawn from the same rich storehouse.

2.—*A History of the Political and Military Events of the late War between the United States and Great Britain.* By SAMUEL PERKINS, Esq. 8vo. pp. 512. S. Converse. New Haven.

THE time has hardly arrived, when a philosophical and impartial history of the late war can be written. Although the waves of party feeling have subsided, which ran so high and turbulent amidst the events of that period, yet their influence still lingers in most minds, which are as yet sufficiently mature for composing a history. The long cherished excitement, which preceded and accompanied the war, imparted a deep tinge to the political atmosphere of the country, from which few persons at this day can be supposed to be free. Mr Perkins, however, pretends not to write a philosophical history, but only to present a narrative of facts; and in this point of view, his book is a better arranged and more convenient manual, for speedy reference to all the important incidents relating to the last war, than any we have seen.

The author takes up the subject *de novo*, and goes back to the origin of the doctrine, introduced by England into the law of nations in 1756, in regard to the commerce of neutrals with the colonies of belligerents, namely, 'that no other trade should be allowed to neutrals, with the colonies of a belligerent in time of war, than what is allowed by the parent state in time of peace.' He justly dates the commencement of the difficulties, which grew up into the late war, in the promulgation of this arbitrary law. It gave rise to the ridiculous notion of paper blockades, unjust prohibitory decrees, and the odious practice of impressment on board neutral vessels. In short, the retaliatory regulations adopted by England and France during the last continental war, the orders in council of the one, and the Berlin and Milan decrees of the other, showed an unprincipled disregard of the rights of neutrals, and of the acknowledged and sacred laws of nations, which, if persevered in, would speedily dissolve the relations of civilised society, and bring upon the world

a new age of barbarism. The method pursued by the author is first to recount some of the causes and events, which induced the war. He then proceeds to give a brief outline of the debates in Congress on the subject, the views of the two parties, and the constitutional questions that came up for discussion. The main body of the work follows, in which all the important incidents of the war are narrated in a style and manner sufficiently perspicuous. The whole is closed with an account of the circumstances, which led to the negotiation for peace, the Russian emperor's offer of mediation and its failure, the meeting of the American and British commissioners, the topics of discussion between them, and the final result of peace.

The general execution of the author's task may be commended; his method and the divisions of his subjects are excellent; and his style is, as it should be in a work of this sort, clear and expressive, and never encumbered with affected, or ambitious ornament. But we have faults to complain of. He is not choice in his use of words. We have *progressing* and *grade*. It is true our Congress and executive cabinet have almost rendered these words national, as well as *locate*, and *sectional*. But literary men should be the last to yield to innovations of this sort, arising more from ignorance than necessity. Another fault is an extreme negligence in omitting marks of quotation, and thus making the reader think he is enlightened by Mr Perkins's ingenious reasonings, or profound discussions, when in fact he has been listening to an extract from a public document, or official report, or a speech in Congress. This fault may be the printer's, but from whatever quarter it comes, it is without excuse. We do not in all cases commend the author's judgment in the selection of his materials. For instance, the muster roll of the Macedonian; the private letter of Commodore Bainbridge about the sailors' prize money, and about one sailor's 'marrying his Poll,' and another's 'sending his little Jack to school;' and the letter of the ladies of Chillicothe with a sword to the 'youthful soldier' of Sandusky, and the 'youthful soldier's' reply; these are not matters of grave history. Let the facts be stated if necessary, but the details are trifling and inappropriate. The circumstantial account of the trial of General Hull is singularly out of place. History required only the results; and more especially at this time, when, from the recent investigations of the subject, the public seems entirely convinced, that whatever mistakes of judgment General Hull may have committed, and whatever censure these deserved in an officer with his responsibility, yet the course pursued towards him was precipitate and rash in the extreme, founded on an imperfect view of the whole case, and conducted under circumstances peculiarly aggravating to the accused. General Hull was a brave and meritorious officer throughout the whole Revolution; he was

the intimate friend of Washington, and no lisp was ever heard, that he did not do his duty as a soldier and a patriot. Is the page of history to be blackened by a disgraceful censure on such a man, because in an evil hour he took charge of an expedition, the ultimate failure of which no human sagacity, or wisdom, or courage could have prevented? Are the services of a life to be blotted out by the mistakes of a day, or is the fair fame of a hero of the Revolution to be sacrificed forever to screen the faults of those, whose negligence or want of foresight contributed, as much as anything, to the disasters into which he fell? We are no apologists for the indiscretion, or the errors of General Hull; he may have committed these like other men; but we protest, and every American at this day ought to protest, against having this transaction recorded as a part of our history, unaccompanied with that strong disapprobation, which the justice of the case imperiously demands.



3.—*Mercantile Penmanship reduced to a regular System of Chirographic Drawing, the Letters classed according to Similarity and Simplicity, and elementary Words ranged upon the perpendicular Column.* By ALLISON WRIFFORD. New York. 1824.

IF the value of an art may be allowed to bear any proportion to the extent of its use, few can claim a higher rank than that of Chirography. It has been called the ‘soul of commerce, the picture of the past, the regulator of the future, and the messenger of thought.’ Since this art is so universal, and comes so perpetually before the eyes of all classes of society, why should not a beautiful hand writing be deemed among the most desirable accomplishments in a finished education? To write legibly is necessary, but taste, elegance, and beauty of execution seem to be much less sought after in this, than in many of the sister arts, where the utility is much less, and where skill deserves not higher commendation. It is somewhere said, that a beautiful specimen of penmanship is ‘a speaking picture;’ and like other pictures it will gratify the eye, and add to the sum of refined enjoyment, in exact proportion to the degree of perfection with which it is executed. To copy the objects of nature on canvass is no doubt a useful and elegant exercise of the imagination and judgment, but the taste is hardly more improved by it, or the faculties better disciplined, than in forming with grace and ease, as the fancy may dictate, those lines of speaking beauty and meaning, which tell of thoughts never to be uttered by the mute voice of nature, or shadowed forth by its most varied images.